

## **MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** Columbus Redevelopment Commission

**FROM:** Heather Pope, Redevelopment Director

**DATE:** December 8, 2016

**RE:** Riverfront Redevelopment Project, Design Team Selection and Recommendation

### **INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE:**

The City of Columbus is fortunate to sit on the banks of the confluence of two rivers – the East Fork of the White River and Flat Rock River. For more than 50 years, or at least since the 1970's, the citizens and leaders of our community have discussed, debated and dreamed of enhancing and developing the city's "riverfront". Discussion and debate was often focused on "where, what, how much and when". The dream, however, was always clear – the community wanted to create a vibrant, welcoming, environmentally stable and sustainable waterfront that provided our community and visitors with recreational and public art enhancements, additional "People Trail" connections, economic benefits and 2<sup>nd</sup> Street "Gateway to the City" beautifications.

With all this in mind, the current city administration and the Columbus Redevelopment Commission feel the timing is right to start turning a long-time dream into reality. Citywide infrastructure improvements, such as the State Street gateway and Fifth Street enhancement and beautification projects are both taking shape and, ultimately, Fifth Street will guide and encourage more visitors and community citizens to Mill Race Park and the riverfront. The Pump House renovation is complete and the city wants to build upon the excitement and riverfront interest the renovation has created. And finally, the People Trail expansion and connection project compliments perfectly, the riverfront link between Second and Third Street Bridges.

### **BACKGROUND:**

This past summer, a Riverfront Community Committee was formed (membership listing attached to e-mail). Representatives from the Arts Council, Columbus Young Professionals, Landmarks Columbus, the Visitors Center, community stakeholders, downtown merchants, and the City of Columbus Engineering, Parks & Recreation and Redevelopment Departments provided valuable input on what the community wanted to see along the riverfront. The committee's marching orders were to go into the community and gather citizen ideas on what was important and desired. From this research and idea generation, a "Request for Proposal" was generated. (RFP attached to e-mail).

### **PROCESS:**

On September 30, 2016, the Redevelopment Commission issued a Request for Proposal (RFP) for Design Teams for the Riverfront Redevelopment project. Invitations were sent to various design firms, the RFP was listed on the Redevelopment website and notice of the RFP was listed in The Republic newspaper for three consecutive weeks. Ultimately, five (5) design teams submitted proposals for consideration.

Each included their relevant experience, qualifications, project understanding and approach, resumes for key team members, and a fee range. The five design teams that submitted proposals were:

1. Hitchcock Design Group, Indianapolis / Naperville
2. MKSK, Indianapolis / West Lafayette
3. Stantec, Columbus, OH
4. Rundell Ernstberger Associates, Indianapolis
5. Forum, Chicago, IL

In early October the Riverfront RFP Evaluation Team was created to review, evaluate and score the submitted proposals. Evaluation Team members included:

- Dave Hayward, City Engineer
- Heather Pope, Redevelopment Director
- Stan Gamso, Legal Counsel for CRC
- Kyle Hendricks, Riverfront Community Committee member, Columbus Young Professionals
- Jeff Logston, Legal Counsel for Moravec Realty, Pumphouse
- Karen Valiquett, Riverfront Project Manager, CORE Planning Strategies, LLC

Many factors were considered in determining the best-suited design team. These factors included:

- Riverfront project experience
- Trail design and dam modification experience
- Permitting and regulatory agency experience
- Team cohesion
- Overall project approach
- Community engagement experience
- River recreation experience
- Economic development involvement

All five (5) design team proposals were high quality, but two (2) teams clearly stood out above the rest. The two (2) standout teams were also the highest-scoring, and therefore were invited to interview. The teams interviewed were Hitchcock Design Group and MKSK. Following the interviews, the Evaluation Team met again for further discussion, interview de-brief and evaluation.

#### **RECOMMENDATION:**

After careful consideration, the Evaluation Team unanimously selected Hitchcock Design Group as the design team for recommendation to the Redevelopment Commission for the Riverfront Redevelopment Project. A detailed justification follows.

#### **JUSTIFICATION:**

Hitchcock Design Group not only scored high marks in all the factors outlined above, but also stood out above the competition in the following four (4) areas:

- Extensive Riverfront project experience for similarly-sized projects
- Inclusion of sub-consultants with specialty expertise
  - S2O Design and Engineering for River Recreation design
  - Hugh Lighting Design for specialty lighting design
- Team Cohesion

- Design team members from the all of the consultants have worked together extensively on several projects, as well as in the community
- Detailed and Extensive Community Outreach Plan
  - Multiple input and review meetings with the Citizens Committee and other key stakeholders
  - 2-day on-site workshop – “working meetings” with CRC, Citizens Committee, stakeholders, and public
  - Public Meetings

**COST:**

The fees from all five proposals ranged from a low of \$117,000 to a high of \$299,000.

Company	Fee Range	
	Low	High
REA	\$117,000	\$133,000
Forum	\$128,000	\$160,000
Stantec	\$134,000	\$136,000
MKSK	\$168,000	\$185,000
Hitchcock	\$223,000	\$299,000

Hitchcock Design Group’s fee ranged from \$223,000 - \$299,000. The second place team, MKSK, fee range was \$168,000 - \$185,000. The hourly rates in each proposal were all very similar. The difference in cost was almost exclusively based on the number of hours that design teams would spend working on the project.

The RFP did not specify a budget or give any guidance on the fee expected in the proposals. Design teams were encouraged to put forth their best plan based on the information in the RFP, and include a fee range associated with that scope of work. The RFP did not ask for, and the proposals did not include, detailed fee justification. It was the intent of the evaluation team to select the best qualified design team for the project. It is standard practice to negotiate scope and fee after a designer is selected based on qualification, to ensure the Owner is getting exactly what they want and not paying for additional services that are not required for the success of the project.

The Evaluation Team was most impressed with the QUALITY and EXPERIENCE of the Hitchcock Team, as well as the SCOPE of the Hitchcock proposal. The scope outlined below, showing the lower fee of \$223,000, still includes project elements that set Hitchcock Design Group above the competition, as well as including the use of the consultants S20 and Hugh Lighting Design during the construction document phase.

The Evaluation Team as well as the Project Manager believes Hitchcock’s lower fee of \$223,000 is highly acceptable and still keeps the project fiscally responsible while ensuring an exceptional design and public outreach program.

**SCOPE:**

The chart below shows a high-level comparison of PROJECT SCOPE and FEES for Hitchcock Design Group and MKSK.

<b>Hitchcock Design Group \$299,000 (high)</b>	<b>Hitchcock Design Group \$223,000 (low)</b>	<b>MKSK \$185,000 (single fee)</b>
Public Outreach Plan	Public Outreach Plan	Not addressed in proposal
Public Communication Tools, including website	Public Communication Tools, including website	Project Website
Hydraulic Model	Hydraulic Model	Hydraulic Model
9 meetings with Citizens Committee, key stakeholders, and Public	8 meetings with Citizens committee, key stakeholders, and Public	3-4 meetings with Citizens Committee
2-day series of on-site workshops, which include general public and stakeholder interviews and an evening public input workshop	2-day series of on-site workshops, with general public and stakeholder interviews	2 meetings with General Public
Regulatory agency meetings included in stakeholder meetings.	Regulatory agency meetings included in stakeholder meetings	3 meetings with Regulatory Agencies
8 meetings to review design with staff	8 meetings to review design with staff	Not stated in proposal
2 meetings/presentations to CRC	2 meetings/presentation to CRC	3 presentations to CRC
Draft Riverfront Improvement Guidelines (standards and best practices including allowed and preferred types of uses, connectivity appearance, storm water management, incentives, process and assistance	NO Draft Riverfront Improvement Guidelines	Not addressed in proposal
S20 (River Recreation Designer) participation in 6 on site meetings	S20 (River Recreation Designer) participation in 4 on site meetings	No specialty River Recreation Designer
Riverfront Market Analysis by Market Feasibility Advisors	NO Riverfront Market Analysis by Market Feasibility Advisors	No specialty Market Analysis consultant
3 CBEL staff members at meetings	Reduction to 2 CBEL staff members at some meetings	
Hugh Lighting on team but not engaged until Construction Documents	Hugh Lighting on team but not engaged until Construction Documents	No specialty Lighting consultant

**NEXT STEPS:**

The Evaluation Team is confident that the Hitchcock Design Group is the best-suited design team for the Riverfront Redevelopment project. We enthusiastically recommend to the Redevelopment Commission that Hitchcock Team be awarded the project at a fee not to exceed \$223,000.

A resolution to approve the design team selection for the Riverfront Redevelopment project will be on the December 19<sup>th</sup> agenda.

Once a contract is executed the design team will proceed with their outreach plan, holding a kick-off meeting, gathering information and data and preparing preliminary design concepts.

If you should have any questions or comments, please don't hesitate to call me. In my absence, please call Jayne Farber, 812-376-2503.

Attached to the e-mail are the following documents:

1. Request for Proposal (RFP)
2. Hitchcock Design Group proposal
3. MKSK proposal
4. Riverfront Community Committee List